



"LIBERTY OR DEATH."

PRAIRIE CITY, K. T., FEB. 25, 1858.

Election for Delegates to the Constitutional Convention.—The True Issue.—Oligarchy vs. the People.

On the second Tuesday in March, the people of Kansas are to elect one hundred delegates to frame a State Constitution. There is an issue involved in this election that perhaps many people do not comprehend.—The old issue between the Free State and Pro-Slavery parties is now among the things that were. The question of Slavery will hardly be considered at this election, for it is well known that it would be a matter of impossibility to elect even a "corporal's guard" of pro-slavery men delegates to this convention. The people of Kansas are unconcerned on this score.

It is supposed by many that the only existing issue between the people of the Territory at the present time is that of Democracy vs. Republicanism. They are mistaken.—To some extent this question will be pressed at the ensuing election, and unless the true friends of Freedom are alert, some of the enemies of their cherished principles may stealthily slide into the Convention. But even this is a matter of minor importance in comparison to one issue that has been covertly sprung upon them. To the disgrace of us and our sacred cause have the people of the Territory to array themselves in such a position against the office-holders and many leading men of their party, as the Democratic enemies of the Lecompton Constitution hold against that instrument. The questions involved are similar. The Democratic opponents of the Lecompton fraud base their enmity upon the conduct of the begetters of that spawn in refusing to submit it to the people for their ratification or rejection. *The people, say they, should be privileged to have a voice in matters of such momentary interest where their welfare is concerned.* This train of reasoning can now be employed by the uncorrupted constituents of the present Territorial Legislature against that body. Their constituents view them in the same light that Douglas Democrats do the satellites of John Calhoun. They cannot look at them in any other light.

Last fall the Free State party of Kansas were induced to venture into an election for Territorial officers.—Through motives of policy and a disposition to evince a conciliatory spirit did they condescend to this humiliating operation. Many ardent and sincere advocates of the cause of human liberty were bitterly opposed to the movement, and would not be induced to yield their position in opposition to the voting policy, until they were satisfied that nothing would be done by the Legislature, should the Free State men succeed in obtaining possession of it, but to "wipe out" the entire bogus code, and then adjourn *sine die*. They were assured by the most earnest advocates of the voting policy that this should comprise the extent of their legislation. True, there was an issue in nominating candidates for the Legislature of selecting men who were in favor of and who were opposed to that body preserving a longer existence than to obliterate the bogus code, but it was conceded by everybody, that if the Legislature-preserving men should prevail, nothing but laws of a general character should be legislated upon. No question but that of Legislature-preserving and anti-Legislature-preserving was considered at the October election; at least, so far as the masses of the people were aware. There may have been other questions under consideration by designing men, but if so, their operations were conducted covertly. The people, then, were prepared for no other result than either that of the disbandment of the Territorial Legislature, or the legislation of acts of a general character. The Free State party controlled the election and got possession of the Legislature. At the proper time for its convening, they assembled. The members of the Legislature who were in favor of con-

tinuing the Territorial Government were in the majority, and the government was allowed to exist. Their constituents were willing to submit to this policy, for they had been permitted to express their sentiments on the question fairly, at the ballot-box. The Legislature began to enact general laws. Its constituents were satisfied. It commenced the work of enacting special laws. Its constituents began to open their eyes, but conceded. Finally they broached the matter of removing the capital from Lecompton. This was venturing a shade too far. *The people wanted to be consulted in a matter of such import as this.* They justly felt outraged. They entertained feelings of bitter antipathy against Lecompton, and at the first opportunity they designed designating, by their expressions through the ballot-box, a point for locating the Territorial capital. They were totally unprepared for the Legislature taking that matter exclusively into their hands. What surprised and chagrined them more was the point selected for the location of the capital. Instead of Topeka, Manhattan, Tecumseh or Council Grove, which towns had for a long time been contending and held before the public as candidates for the capital, they selected *Minneola!* situated at least one hundred miles from the center of the Territory, and containing nothing but prairie grass, hazle brush and weeds!—not a single house within the town site, though comprising about sixteen hundred acres of land. Fraud, bribery and corruption were apparent in the very face of the movement. The constituents of the Legislature felt that they had been outrageously betrayed, that their interests had been sacrificed to the advancement of the pecuniary interests of the members of the Legislature.

For this reason do the people of Kansas and the Douglas Democrats entertain similar emotions. Are not their positions parallel ones?

The people know that the Legislature would not have been so disregardful of the interests of their constituents, had they not been bribed and bartered, but as yet most of them, probably, are unapprised as to the means employed to effect this corruption. We pretend to have some light in the matter, and those of our readers who peruse this article will be informed of all that we know on the subject. The statements we make are facts, and we are prepared to back them by satisfactory evidence.

Several months ago, a few shrewd money-making schemers (the names of whom we could mention, but forbear so to do for certain reasons), conceived the idea of purchasing land in the vicinity of Centropolis for the purpose of securing the location at that point of the Territorial capital. Their first movement in the matter was to obtain the assistance and co-operation of the leaders and most influential members of the Free State party. This effected, they then commenced operating with the members of the Legislature, upon its convening at the extra session. Every member that bribery could move was approached, and finally they succeeded, by giving them stockholders' interests, in securing the support of every *Free State member of that body with the exception of eight!* Praying men, religious men, *Ministers of the gospel*, and others whom their constituents supposed to be incorruptible, yielded to the seductions of Mammon, and descended to the ignominious position of their predecessors. Their next move was to hush the voice of the press. Those very presses who have heretofore been the most clamorous about political dishonesty and corruption among their opponents, were the first approached, and they conceded unresistingly.

But there were a few who adored principle more than gold! They could not be, are not hushed.

The capital was located at the designated point. That matter having been effected, nearly all the subsequent legislative enactments was to the end of putting money in their own pockets, unmindful of its effect upon the rights of the people. The Leavenworth and Fort Gibson Railroad Company applied to them for a charter. Between Lawrence and Osage City they had no points designated, for the purpose of being privileged to run their road through

such places as would offer them the most liberal inducements, and which would be the most available to them. But the Legislature would do nothing for them until *Minneola* was made a point. By this official dictation, they are compelled to run several miles from a direct course and at an additional expense of several hundred thousands of dollars.

The people can now see what a gigantic influence they have got to contend against. *Seventy* of the most influential members of the Free State party, several Free State papers, and a mint of gold, all on one side—the people on the other. The influence of that large body is potent. It is a powerful element to wrestle with.—*But it can be crushed—it must be, will be done!* So long as it has existence and the people are asleep to its operations, they are as much deprived of their liberties as they were under the reigns of the Border Ruffian Government.

If no other method can be devised to wrest ourselves from the clutches of this gigantic monopoly, we can resort to the means used by us in days gone by to free us from Border Ruffian tyranny.

We have hopes in the ballot-box. We believe the people will be cautious enough in the future to put such men in power who will tumble this oligarchy to the ground.

The issue, then, at the coming election for delegates to the Constitutional Convention, is Oligarchy vs. People. The Oligarchy is at work night and day through the instrumentality of their mercenary tools, gold and bribery, to get men elected to the Convention who will vote to retain the capital at *Minneola*. The nominations for delegates have already taken place in some localities, and *Minneola* men have been secured. Those whom they fail to elect will be approached in the Convention with gold or shares in the town, to purchase their votes. It behooves the people to send such men to the Convention who will vigorously fight the *Minneola* swindle. We want men there who will not swerve from the path of duty—who will defend the rights of the people, and witheringly rebuke the betrayers of their confidence—who will expose the hypocritical expounders of the "Word of God," level to the dust treacherous demagogues, indignantly hurl back offers of bribery to their profferers, and faithfully work for the welfare of their constituency.

Citizens of Prairie City, next Saturday you are to elect two delegates to attend the Convention at Lawrence to nominate delegates for the Constitutional Convention. In selecting men to represent you at the Lawrence Convention, the questions for you to consider, are—"Who are the best acquainted with the present political sentiments of the various candidates that will be put in nomination at the Lawrence Convention?"—"Whom can we safely trust?"—"Who are the most competent to represent us?" Calhoun Township will probably have at least two delegates in the Constitutional Convention, and our delegates ought to be instructed to use their influence to secure the nomination of such men as our people will designate. In matters of such vital import as the present one, it is our imperative duty to smother all local and minor prejudices, and labor to promote the best interests of the people.

Think, ponder, reflect!

A Chance to Get Cuba

The latest news from Europe is that the Spanish Government will refuse to give satisfaction to the United States for the outrage which its officials in Cuba perpetrated upon our mail-steamer, *El Dorado*, in firing into it, endangering life, and subsequently rifling it, in a practical way, of its mails. This outrage upon the high seas our Government (says the Cincinnati Enquirer) is bound, by a sense of national honor, to have atoned for. Both the last and the present Administration have made persevering efforts to that end. If the Spanish Government persists in its refusal, it may lead to important results, and give us a chance to get Cuba in an honorable manner, by national conquest.

That was a wise nigger, who, in speaking of the happiness of married people, said, "Dat ar 'penda altogether how dey enjoy demselves."

[From the Champion Extra of Feb. 20.]

Exciting News from Fort Scott!

Missouri Ruffians Invading the Territory Again!

HOUSEBURNING AND MURDERING!

G. W. CLARK IN THE FIELD!

130 Border Ruffians Under Arms at Barnesville!

All Free State Settlers to be Expelled from the Sugar Creek and Osage Country.

ARMS FROM WESTPORT!

OFFICE OF THE "FREEMEN'S CHAMPION," Saturday, Feb. 20—10 P. M.

Capt. O. P. BAYNE, Col. D. B. JOHNSON and Lieut. BUNDAY, have just arrived from Fort Bayne, on the Osage, who bring us news of the most exciting and alarming nature. To give a minute statement of affairs as they at present exist, subjoined will be found a letter written by Capt. BAYNE to Gen. LANE, but was not dispatched owing to an invasion into the country by Missourians occurring before it could be mailed. Capt. BAYNE thereupon determined to proceed at once to Lawrence in person to obtain assistance from the Territorial Militia. The letter will tell the story up to the time of the invasion.

LUELLA, Feb. 12, 1858.

MAJOR GEN. J. H. LANE; Sir, I have to report to you the state of affairs in this part of the Territory.

When you was here, the usurpers of Freedom of Southern Kansas were awed into submission from the forces then present, but when you returned north, they, relying on their numbers, commenced robbing, stealing, plundering, and attempted to rob all Free State men who happened to fall into their hands. In this state of affairs I wrote you my last. Upon the complaint made to me by Johnson, I deemed it necessary to arrest those men and bring them to justice; of whom George W. Clark, Register in the Land office; Mr. Margraves, Probate Judge; B. Hill, Ex-Sheriff; Mr. Farley, District Att'y; Mr. Harris, Constable; Mr. Houston, County Surveyor; Mr. Brocket, a partner in the Western Hotel; Mr. Flurry, proprietor of a Drinking House; Mr. Harlan, Flurry's bar-tender; Mr. Greenawood, the Border Ruffian telegraph; Dennis Sullivan, an old Irishman; Mr. McCay, partner in the Western Hotel; all of Fort Scott.

So much for National Democracy. Knowing there would be resistance on the part of these men, and not deeming my force sufficient, I sent North for help. But the companies that was left subject to our orders either consulted their feelings by remaining by a warm fire side, or from some other cause, failed to respond to the call. The emergency of the case demanded prompt action, so we determined to try them with our present forces. In the mean time, the *Fort Scott Democrat*, one of the Organs of despotism, edited in the swill-tub of the new fangled Democracy, commenced its howl of justification of these midnight marauders, villifying the people of the Osage indiscriminately. In this state of affairs, with only thirty-one men, we determined to arrest these outlaws at the risk of our own lives and the destruction of the Fort. Being joined on the Marmaton by ten men, relying on lead and the courage of our men, we marched on the night of the 10th inst., and at day-break was in gun shot of the Fort. Being met by a deputation of the peaceable citizens of the Fort, was informed that Gen. Clarke and his band of desperadoes, noted for their threats of pillages and brave talk, had fled under cover of darkness, like wolves, to their old dens in Missouri. Such is generally the case with men who burn houses, rob widows, and leave the orphan crying for bread, as Clark has done in times past. We were welcomed as harbingers of peace, and our authority recognized as legal. We had now full possession of the Fort, and was viewed by the pro-slavery men, as one of the strong bulwarks of the Free State cause in Kansas. After receiving a warm breakfast, gratis, and receiving assurances from Judge Williams, and Geo. Crawford, that the stolen property should be returned on the following Tuesday, leaving the care of that to the honest citizens who remained, we returned to the Little

Osage to watch for further developments.

Yours &c

O. P. BAYNE.
Capt. Co. A. 1st Reg. Kansas M.
P. S. You are welcome to publish this if you choose, for we will all vouch for its truthfulness.
O. P. BAYNE, Captain.
Col. D. B. JOHNSON.
JOHN McCANNON, Q. M.
J. G. ANDERSON.

On Tuesday about fifty Missourians assembled at Fall's store, about 2½ miles from Barnesville, and proceeded that night to the latter place, where they were joined on the following day by 80 men, mostly Missourians, from Fort Scott, under command of the notorious out-throat Gen. G. W. Clark, the murderer of BARBER, and sent out word to the inhabitants of Free State settlements in that vicinity that their avowed intentions were to sack and burn their houses, HANG every person identified with the Kansas Militia, and extirpate every Free State person in that vicinity. "No quarter," was their watchword.—Prof. GRIFFITH, Messrs. HARRIS and BARBER and several others, of Marmaton, heard these threats in person, and requested Capt. BAYNE to proceed at once to Lawrence to obtain assistance from the Territorial Militia, and that if the Militia were dilatory about acquiescing with their request, to rally up aid from any quarter where it could be obtained. The Prairie City Guards, under command of Capt. O. P. WILLET, will rally to the assistance of their friends to-morrow.

Free State men, arouse! and fly at once to the scene of action. Probably ere this news reaches you, the work of pillage and murder has commenced. The Border Ruffians have a deep plot concocted for the extirpation of the Freemen of Kansas, and unless they are successfully resisted at the outset, many homes will be made desolate ere their operations can be checked. The Ruffians are now more virulent than ever in their hostility to the Free State Party.

To arms! To arms!

I, Capt. O. P. Bayne, do certify that "the foregoing statements are true, to the best of my knowledge and belief."
O. P. BAYNE.

Pate on Kansas Affairs.

H. Clay Pate, the hero of Black Jack and Postmaster at Westport, Mo., seems to be considerably "exorcised" in regard to Kansas affairs. In a letter to the *Missouri Republican*, under date of Jan. 10th, he says: "Jim Lane's party are now actively engaged in disturbing the settlers, by getting out writs for all prominent pro-slavery men, and having them directed 'to the captain of any militia company.'"

"Many fearing harsh treatment, rather than submit to arrest, have left the Territory for the present. It is by this means that Lane expects either to drive out all the settlers, or raise another war. He is partially succeeding in one and may succeed in the other. A company of three hundred Missourians came near leaving Weston last week for the Territory to protect their friends, and would have done so but for Gen. Calhoun.

Beware

We warn our friends everywhere to beware of purchasing stock of any description in the "corruption" town of "Minneola." The curse of an outraged people rests upon it. The location of the Capital at that place will be of no benefit to it, as it was located illegally, and as a consequence the government will not expend any money in the erection of public buildings. The location is a poor one—on a little dry creek, opposite to a village which died a natural death in consequence of its ineligible position. Coal, stone and timber are scarce—all the elements of wealth and prosperity are wanting. Be not deceived! It is a speculating swindle! A breath of the popular feeling will knock the crazy thing into atoms. "Touch not the unclean thing."—*Kansas News.*

The meeting of the anti-Lecompton Democrats in Philadelphia, Feb. 8th, was an imposing assemblage. Col. Forney presided. The attendance was estimated at six thousand. Governor Stanton spoke at length and with his usual vigor. Letters were read from Governor Walker and Governor Wise.

The Sentiment in Wisconsin.

The Milwaukee (Wis.) *Free Democrat*, in discussing upon the President's Lecompton Message, points off its article in the following pungent style:

"We tell the President if this usurpation succeeds, he will need more troops in Kansas to put the Lecompton Constitution into operation. We do not know what the Free State men of Kansas will do, but we hope they will resist the Lecompton Constitution unto death. We hope they will treat all who try to put in force, as our forefathers did the officers under the stamp Act, and as Grew did the ruffian Keitt in the House of Representatives last week. If the President under takes to play the part of King George, we hope enough of the spirit of '76 is left in the hearts of the people, to create a new revolution which shall overthrow the tyrannical slave oligarchy. If such a usurpation as this is successful, and the people submit to it, our liberties are lost, and our government becomes a slave despotism. The people must prepare to fight, for the ballot box is no longer a protection. Federal bayonets bristle at the polls, and the right of suffrage has become a farce. Well said Hale in the Senate, the other day, not a man nor a dollar would he vote to give the President more troops till the rights of the freemen of Kansas were acknowledged and protected.

"We repeat our hope then, that the people of Kansas will fight rather than submit to this usurpation. If it must come to the arbitrament of the sword, it may as well be settled now. Let the Free State men of Kansas then, assert their rights, and call upon the freemen of the North to stand by them. The voices of thousands from hill-top and valley, from prairie and plain, will answer their call. The insolence of the slaveholders, in Congress and out of it, is past endurance. It may be met and chastised as it deserves to be. Let every Southern bully be served as Keitt was when he assaulted Grew. Let Northern men stand their ground everywhere, and let the claret run. The gospel of death to slavery must be preached in earnest, and if leaden hail and will-twisted hemp will enforce such a gospel, and all other means fail, we are for using them vigorously. And now is a good time to begin the reformatory work. If Congress endorses Lecompton, we hope every Border Ruffian will either be driven out of Kansas, shot or hung. Amen."

With such sentiments emanating from the hearts of our friends in the North, are those people of Kansas whose connection and co-operations with the Free State party are impelled by nobler and higher motives than that of pecuniary gain, going to submit to the process of being cajoled, bamboozled, defrauded and misled by a few unscrupulous, treacherous and avaricious demagogues, who have crept into their folds like "wolves in sheep's clothing," and who by their sycophancies, canting admonishments and double-faced maneuverings, have attained influential positions in our party? Are the people willing to be used as unsophisticated tools, at their own pecuniary expense and at the sacrifice of their principles, to carve out positions of wealth, power and eminence for these men? With such emphatic assurances that, by simply *acting like men*, they will be strongly maintained in such endeavors by their Northern friends, do they not feel competent to act independently for themselves, irrespective of the proffered advice of mammon-worshipping and flattery-seeking mock leaders, and work according to the promptings of their hearts? Are the Freemen of Kansas afraid of mock leaders?

Come Along.

To those of our friends in the East who propose coming to Kansas, we say, come as early in the spring as practicable, as you are certain to do better then than later in the season.

From what we are able to learn, we are induced to believe there will be a large emigration of good settlers here next season.

This is just the country for farmers, mechanics and business men, who wish new homes and locations to come to. The country is new, and has yet to be made. Come on, boys, and grow up with it.

Stone masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, plasterers, wagon makers, gun smiths, cabinet makers, teamsters, brick makers, brick layers, shoe makers, tailors, painters, and men willing to work at any manual labor may emigrate to the Territory, and find little difficulty in procuring steady work and remunerative wages.